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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Bulgaria

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(LISTED BELOW) 25X1SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO. 25X1SUBJECT Propaganda on Frontier Crossings
Abroad
Posts/Location of Land Mines/Difficulties in Crossing
Frontier Guard
Tundza RiverPLACE
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Propaganda on Impossibility of Crossing Frontier

- "In the Communist propaganda a lot is being said about guarding of frontiers, numerous patrols, mine fields, police dogs, etc. The aim of that propaganda is to convince the average inhabitant of the country that it is practically impossible to cross the frontier illegally. Many people, those who live inside the country far from the frontier zone, believe that this is so. The propaganda machine from time to time releases stories about people who allegedly tried and were either caught or shot. From time to time a family of a would-be escapee receives a notification of his death.

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Frontier Guard Posts

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7. "The segment of the frontier which was guarded by frontier Kokicze unit was five kilometers long and ran alongside of the Tundza river. Near the village of Fikiel, presently called Matoczin, the frontier line separates from the river which runs into Turkish territory.
8. "At the Kokicze post, there are about one hundred officers and men belonging to frontier guards units. In addition in each of the villages, there is so-called 'fighting group' composed of young men who went through military training, are members of the Party, or of the Dimitrov Youth Movement. Guns belonging to the group are kept at 'selsavet', selsoviet and the unit is led by the officers or NCO's of frontier guards. In case of an alert, the group takes part in the frontier's operation in the identical way the regular border guard acts. In our village such a group was composed of about ten people and was called upon for services at the frontier once or twice a month. There were no regular training periods for the group.

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9. "At the Kokicze Post there were four police dogs, three grey and one black. They were taken out only during the night and kept locked in the daytime. They were always ahead of the patrol.

10. "The patrols always walk along two paths: One on the frontier line and the other about one km inside the country. In addition to patrolling units, hidden posts are set high on the top of the hills. In case of an alert, all the units set up ambushes in places where frontier crossing is the easiest.

11. "At our segment of the frontier, there are no barbed wires but there is a wire one meter 50 cm high. [redacted]

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Location of Land Mines

12. "In the vicinity of Tundza, close to the villages of Konstantinovo and Fikiel, there are places where there are mines. In our area [redacted] also had mines, but since the 1948 accident, the mines have been removed. A woman driving an ox cart drove over a mine which exploded killing her and the animals.

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Difficulties of Crossing River

13. "The last problem we faced when crossing the frontier was the river itself. It was deep in places and had a number of cascades. No one unfamiliar with the river and the entire area can hope to cross the frontier.

Frontier Installations

14. "About 14 kilometers from the frontier, there is a belt of shelters, trenches, barbed wires, antiaircraft guns and other similar installations.

Passports

15. "In the frontier area everybody aged 14 or over must have passports.

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18. "The passport with a seal gave [redacted] freedom of movement within the limits of our county. In order to go to another county, it was necessary to get an 'open letter' ('Otkrit list'). This document was issued by the county office of militia in Topolovgrad. An application had to be filed at the 'selsavet' in our village specifying where one wanted to go and for how long. Such an 'open letter' was required only in the pre-frontier area, and one could travel inside the country without it. The control of these documents is very strict if by any chance a stranger appears in the vicinity. In practice the local people seldom bother to ask for the letter when going to visit friends in another county. When one is caught, one is likely to get a fine, but few people think of that. They simply go and avoid control."

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